



STD Epidemiology Summary: Rhode Island, 2003

SYPHILIS: The year 2002 marked the second year in a row that there was a rise in the number of cases of infectious syphilis in the United States with a 12.4% increase from 2001 to 2002¹. Increases of primary and secondary syphilis among men who have sex with men (including bisexuals) of all races have been noted to be associated with outbreaks in large cities, such as Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco, Seattle and Miami.

Rhode Island, like many other parts of the country, has also seen an increase in the reports of infectious syphilis, which comprises primary, secondary and early-latent syphilis. Although the increase in numbers is not quite as dramatic as other regions of the country, it is still significant non the less.

There were 40 cases of infectious syphilis statewide in 2003, an increase of 82% over the 22 reported cases in 2002. Perhaps more striking is the 700% increase in infectious syphilis from 2000 to 2003. Twenty-nine of the forty reported cases (73%) were male and nineteen of those twenty-nine cases (66%) were men who have sex with men . Of the latter, twelve were self reported to be HIV positive. Unlike gonorrhea and chlamydia, where infection is distributed mostly among the 15-24 year old population, the cases of infectious syphilis reported in Rhode Island had an average age of 37 years old.

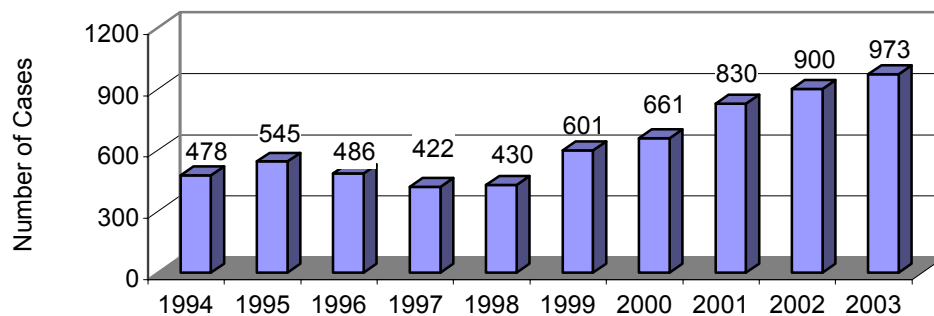
Infectious Syphilis Cases Rhode Island 2000 - 2003								
	<u>2000</u>		<u>2001</u>		<u>2002</u>		<u>2003</u>	
	#	Rate*	#	Rate*	#	Rate*	#	Rate*
Statewide	5	0.5	12	1.1	22	2.2	40	3.8
Core Cities (Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls)	2	0.8	9	3.4	16	6.0	21	7.9
Hispanic	1	1.1	0	0	8	8.8	3	3.3
Black	3	7.2	2	4.8	2	4.8	7	16.7
White	1	0.1	10	1.2	12	1.4	27	3.1

* Rates are expressed as cases/100,000 population. Rates are based on the 2000 Rhode Island population as calculated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

GONORRHEA: The year 2003 marked the fifth year in a row that the number of gonorrhea case in Rhode Island rose. There were 973 cases of gonorrhea reported in 2003 compared to 900 cases in 2002. This corresponds to an 8.1% increase in the number of cases reported to HEALTH from 2002 to 2003. There has been a 126% increase in the reported cases of gonorrhea from 1998, when only 430 cases were reported, to 2003.

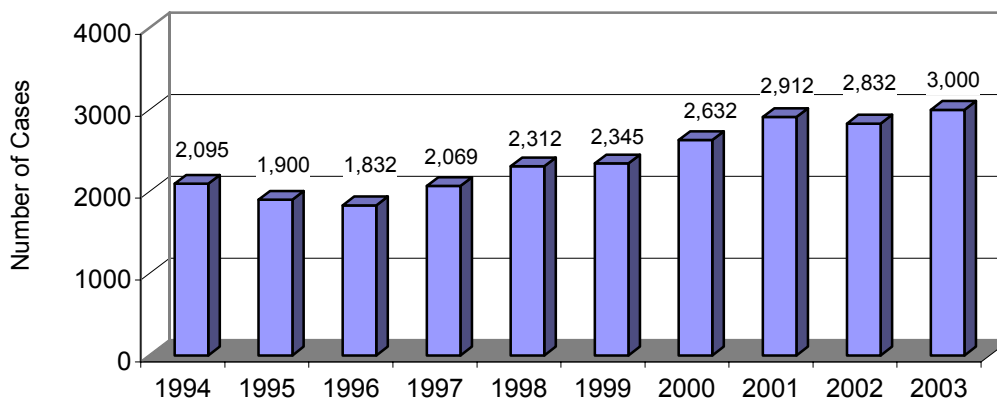
The statewide incidence of gonorrhea rose from 86 cases per 100,000 in 2003 to 93 cases per 100,000 in 2003. Non-hispanic blacks had the highest rate of gonorrhea in Rhode Island at 849 cases per 100,000 people. They were followed by Hispanics at 238 cases per 100,000 and non-hispanic whites at 44 cases per 100,000. Females comprised 53% of the gonorrhea cases.

**Reported Cases of Gonorrhea,
Rhode Island, 1994-2003**



CHLAMYDIA: There were 3,000 cases of chlamydia reported to HEALTH in 2003. This represents a 5.9% increase from the 2,832 cases reported in 2002. The number of cases reported in 2003 represents the highest number of chlamydia cases in a year since it became a reportable disease in Rhode Island. Like in past years in Rhode Island, females accounted for approximately three-quarters of the chlamydia cases. The discrepancy between males and females is more than likely due to the increased use of screening for chlamydia in females rather than the lack of infections in males.

**Reported Cases of Chlamydia,
Rhode Island, 1994-2003**



¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Primary and Secondary Syphilis-United States, 2002. MMWR 2003;52:1117-1120